1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

reason that it breaks the smooth rhythm of its grazing but also because her presence in some way affronts the sheep and might cause disease. *A fortiori* a woman never milks a sheep. Yet there is no rigid avoidance. And, in fact, women regularly do the heavy work in building sheep-folds or moving them to a new site when they are fouled with mud and dung. And relays of women at dawn and dusk bring down the newly born lambs with their mothers from the flock to the clean and better protected sheep-fold near the huts. They are, however, by preference, unmarried girls (τσοῦπρες).

But in relation to the division of labour, the complementary opposition of the sexes in fact turns less upon the opposition of sheep and goats and is more concerned with a wider and more important distinction. Men are occupied with their extensive duties of grazing and protecting the flocks, women within or immediately around the hut, with its central hearth and fire which gives physical warmth and spiritual protection, are concerned with the intensive tasks of the care of children and the provision of food, clothes, and shelter for their family. The expressive role of the woman within the family hut accentuates the quality of motherhood, not sexuality, and it is consistent with this aspect of her social personality that the shepherd brings a sick sheep to his hut to be nursed and cared for by the women. It is a woman who ties a ewe which has lost its lamb to the wall of the hut by a short cord so that it cannot sit, and patiently persuades it to accept the lamb of another ewe which has borne twins.

The assistance women give in the care of the animals is their direct contribution to the stani. Their work within the hut concerns only their own family. These tasks are manifold. They care for the children, cook, bake bread on the open hearth, cut wood or bushes for the fire, carry water in barrels from the spring, sometimes from a very considerable distance. In the stream, or spring, they also wash the clothes of their family. They search the mountain slopes for wild vegetables and herbs and in the summer villages they cultivate a small vegetable garden in which onions, beans, and lettuces are grown. They also keep a few hens. Some of the eggs are kept for the children but the majority are bartered in the village shop for dyes and other small needs. A man may occasionally give his wife a kid

droppings; and a dried snake's head, hidden in a church for forty days and then retrieved, is sovereign against many baleful manifestations. To the Nereids, a danger for all lonely shepherds near pools and streams, young Sarakatsáns are particularly exposed. They are often struck dumb and robbed of their wits by chancing on the Nereid revels and dances, just as mortals were sometimes turned into trees if they had the bad luck to blunder on the dances of the nymphs. There have been many mixed nomad-Nereid marriages, and many a healthy Sarakatsán baby has been stolen from its hanging cradle and replaced by the sickly changeling of one of these water maidens.

Demons of every kind and gender dog the nomads' footsteps up hill and down dale and "chase them into woods." They are the special target of some female supernatural beings called the *Kalotyches* ("the good fortunes") — like the name *Eumenides* ("the kindly ones") for the Furies, a wry, placating misnomer — who are half women, half she-asses, and snake-locked, like Medusa. They plague the flocks and bring bad luck at lambing time and childbed, and they are especially to be feared during the forty days following the birth of a nomad baby.

By far the darkest villain in Sarakatsán demonology is a male spirit known as the *Daouti*. *Daoutis*, sometimes called Pans, are the wildest, strongest, and wickedest of them all. Shaped like satyrs, with half-goat, half-human bodies and long legs with cleft hooves, they have the heads of rams with large twirling horns. Along with certain other demons, *Daoutis* are most dangerous to flocks at three seasons of the year: during Advent, just before lambing; in late April or early May, as the shepherds prepare to leave their winter quarters for the mountains; and from the feast of the Transfiguration until the end of August. They are prone, during these bad periods, to swoop, shrieking like birds of prey, on the cowering flocks, and after two or three of these onslaughts, the beasts begin to perish, sometimes a dozen at a time; they swell up and die. Sliced tortoise meat is used as a counterspell, and the shepherds shift camp at once. If they can find a priest, he sprinkles the new site with holy water, and the sheep's bells are taken off and blessed. Unlike most wicked spirits, *Daoutis* do not flinch from attacking in broad daylight, and possessing the knack of making friends with the dogs, they pad along after the flocks unmolested. Therefore, when an emergency fold is built, the dogs are left behind and fires are lit to make a magic circle of smoke. *Daoutis* also pick up the Christian names of mortals; so the shepherds, if they hear anyone calling them, hold their tongues — answering might rob them of the power of speech for good. These terrible spirits

/114 cont./

252 262 In order to conclude the inventory, it is necessary also to speak of the grasses and vegetables that the Sarakatsani use. The first are made up chiefly of dandelions and other edible wild plants gathered in the countryside, either to be cooked in water for a salad or to be used in making pastries (caucalide, (25) aromatic chervil

25. Condulocarpus apulus.

parella [a type of lichen], wild leek, etc.)

Among the second belong the beans, broad beans, lentils and, recently, potatoes and rice; however, their preparation does not present any peculiarity that need be reported here.

262 Meat, finally, does not make up any of the dishes that we have described. This is because meat constitutes altogether unusual food. (26)

26. Thurnwald: Economie Primitive, p. 121, says that pastoral peoples only exceptionally kill animals for their meat. Livestock is capital on the income of which the people live.

In fact, the herders do not readily "sacrifice" their livestock for their food. However, it is customary that for Christmas, Easter, [521] St. George, St. Demetrius, each one's personal feast day and each time [571] hospitality is called for (whoever the visitor may be), they kill a lamb and roast it on the spit. In all these instances the killing of the lamb takes on a ritual significance which justifies the "sacrifice."

It should be noted that this description of the Sarakatsani cuisine is a faithful account of the diet common among them.

/115/ --The cooking of foods

372 [252] The Sarakatsani practice several methods of cooking, which presuppose a method of lighting fire. This method consists of an oblique striking impact: a flint is struck with an iron hammer; the sparks which are produced ignite a piece of tinder (fig. 96). Then the fire is transferred to /Fig. 96 appears here/ dry grass of brush lying on the hearth (fig. 64). In order to stir up the fire they have recourse to a

/Fig. 64 appears on p.92--Analyst/

/115 cont./

372

Fig. 98

natural draft (brush and dry sticks are arranged in the shape of a cone so that an air current circulates from bottom to top) and to an artifical draft (human breath).

It is necessary to mention in this connection that in the Sarakatsani dwellings the fire is never allowed to go out (whether it be in the huts during the winter months or in the fretzato used for outdoor cooking in the summer).

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With regard to cooking, various methods can be distinguished:

Cooking in pots: a triangular metal tripod which holds on all kinds of pots is set on the hearth flagstones, over the fire. In the relatively less well organized installations (sheepfolds) and in the course of the migrations the tripod is replaced by suitably arranged stones.

Cooking in the"ghastra" (large metal lid /116/ one meter in diameter, a sort of spherical cap, flat and equipped with a handle at the top).

The "ghastra" is placed on the tripod above a well-burning fire in such a way that one side of it rests on the low wall of the hearth and the other on the tripod. Thus the hearth as well as the "ghastra" rapidly reach a very high temperature. When this temperature is judged sufficient, the "ghastra" is removed; then, according to what one wishes to cook, the foods are either put directly on the hot flagstones of the hearth or are kept in a receptacle which itself is placed upon the

/250 cont./

844 602 [114] animals may walk. According to Madame Hadjimichali, (3) the burial takes

3. Ibid., A.I. p. [illegible] .--A statement that our own observations have not permitted us to confirm.

place under the very hearth of the hut. No glance, especially not a male one, must fall on the placenta at that moment.

764 A practice of parallel significance is found in death customs. The deceased is laid on the ground on a velentza until the moment of burial. [775] [262] And in order that his soul should find rest and forgiveness of men and God, "the cake of the dead," the kolyva is prepared on a plate from grains of wheat boiled in water. It represents the body and is likewise placed in the ground.

842 [789] [825] Finally, we must mention again the viper head which the spouses wear as an amulet.

[128] If we have presented all these practices without comment it is because we intend to discuss them all together.

842 821 823 825 831 372 What stands out first of all when we consider them is that the Sarakatsani appeal to the moon, the earth, the fire and the snake--personifying the forces whose common trait is their favorable influence on fertility. All four represent the source of life: the moon "living and inexhaustible in its own regeneration...and the source of universal fertility"; (4)

4. See M. Eliade: Traité, pp. 145, 148 and the bibliography. /?previously/ mentioned.

the earth, mother of all; (5) fire, symbolizing rejuvenation and immortatlity; (6)

5. See G. Samter: Geburt, p. 2 f., M. Eliade: Ibid., p. 223.

6. See H. Jeanmarie: Dionysos, p. 387.

the snake, image of the moon, which regenerates itself by shedding its skin, (7) and which resembles the phallus. (8)

7. G. Van der Leeuw: La religion, p. 67.

8. M. Eliade: Ibid., p. 152.

842 /250 cont./
821 By wearing them or coming in contact with them one benefits from their
823 virtues.
372
825

/251/ In practice all this is interpreted as follows: the decoration
531 of the skirt and the bride's cake serve as the lunar amulets. Giving birth
762 on the ground and in the posture in which the ancient goddess of birth
585 Eilithyia /Artemis/ is shown insures for the child the advantages which
844 come from contact with the earth. (9)
876

9. See B. Nyberg: Kind und Erde, p. 207 f.--Birth by proximity, according to M. Eliade: Ibid., p. 265.--Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 119.--Monolina Marconi: Riflessi mediterranei /Mediterranean reflections/, p. 254 f. p. 254 f.--Marie Delacourt: Stérilité, p. 31 f.

844 The placenta which has nourished the child until then returns to the earth
854 where a new life will rise again (10)

10. G. Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 45.

(the position of the deceased directly on the ground and his commemoration by means of the grain which is buried and comes to life again symbolize the same life cycle). (11)

11. J. Przyluski: La grande déesse, p. 134 f.--G. Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 87.--P.M. Schuhl: La formation de la pensée grecque, p. 211.

372 The healing, invigorating fire which makes mortals immortal and which is
844 born from two pieces of wood representing the two sexes, (12)
842

12. G. Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 49, also citing Ad. Kuhn: Die Herabkunft des Feuers und der /sic--should be: des/ Göttertranks, p. 64 f.

protects the mother who gives birth in front of it, as well as the newborn child. (13) Moreover, it encourages a new impregnation by the burial of the

13. W. Mannhardt: Antike Wald und Feldkulte, p. 503.

372 /251 cont./
844
842 placenta under the hearth. (14)

14. J. Przyluski: Ibid., p. 144.

842 And the head of the viper, with a polyvalent symbolism (lunar as well as
825 chthonian) exerts its influence in the same direction. (15)

15. M. Eliade: Ibid., p. 150, who also cites Frazer: The Folklore in the old Testament /cited in English/, Vol. I, p. 66 f.

842 It seems to us that to the mystery of fertility which is an the basis
191 of the mystery of life itself, the Sarakatsani reacts in the same way as all the peoples who for thousands of years have occupied the geographical area that extends from the Indies to the Italian Peninsula. In the practices enumerated above, the first cosmologies of humanity come to life. They have imbued all the civilizations of the Middle and Near East and infiltrated into Christian practices and into the folklore still alive in western Europe, as far as the more distant countries of Scandinavia and Ireland.

(829) Yet to pass from hypothesis to conviction is not easy, since the Sarakatsani, when speaking of their practices, content themselves, by way of explanation, with replies such as "it does a lot of good," "it is good for one's health," "it is our custom."

But thanks to numerous testimonies at our disposal, /252/ which cover the entire evolution of the various beliefs of the Hellenes from the Homeric epoch to our day, we believe we have the right to assert the validity of our argument.

During this period, which extends over 3000 years, we discover the same symbols involved for the same purposes. Used continuously by the Greeks, they have had an unchanging meaning throughout the ages, a meaning that has been fully demonstrated and that coincides with our foregoing assumption. (16)

/252 cont./

823 Genesis, Chapter 19 /actually chapter 3 verse 19/ "for dust
842 thou are, and into dust shalt thou return: (King James Version)
171 although according to Ν. ΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ : Λαογραφικά, T.B.-
844 p. 269, this quotation is not included in the service of the dead.--According to the physician: ΣΟΡΑΝΟΣ: Περί γυναικείων, p. 357, 12, the women also gave birth kneeling on the ground.--c) Modern Greece: The Karagounides women lay the newborn child on the ground. At Rhodes the same thing is done "so that the muscles of the little one and its body will be strong," Α. ΒΡΟΝΤΗΣ : Λαογραφικά Ρόδου, p. 568.

372 III. On the properties of fire: a) Antiquity: According to
171 the legends of Achilles and Demophon, Thetis and Demeter wished to make themselves immortal by passing through fire, H. Jeanmarie: Ibid., p. 387-6. According to ΠΑΟΙΤΑΡΧΟΥ : Ἀρχαιολογ. Ψ, for Greece, and Virgil: Aeneid, vii, 71, for Rome, the power of fire was considered efficacious against evil influences. According to Przyluski: Ibid., p. 144, the custom of new fire at the beginning of the year represents the energy that reanimates nature after the mortal cold of winter. b) The same custom is to be found in Modern Greece: It is called "the marriage of fire," the fire that is lighted with two pieces of wood, the one "male," the other "female," on Christmas eve or New Year's day, in Thessaly, in Leukas (Greek island), Ν. ΠΑΣΣΑ : Λαογραφικά, p. 123-124 and elsewhere.--We shall speak farther on of the healing properties of fire in case of illness and otherwise. Let us but note the custom, in Macedonia and Throw, of lighting the healing fire by friction in imitation of the coming together of the sexes.

825 /253/ IV. On the snake: a) Antiquity: According to
171 ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΟΥΣ : Ἱστορία Ζώων, Π, 12
[821] and Pliny: Natural History XI, 28, the snake is a representation
[831] of the moon since it appears and disappears. It also has the

/267 cont./

776 233 789 head of the animals. (51)

51. In this way the dark forces are opposed, the auspicious forces being derived from the Church and from religion.

All around the sheepfolds fires that give off a fetid odor are lighted. [824] The thorny shrubs of the enclosures are supposed to forbid the existance of both Daoutis and other unnamed demons, as well as evil in general. (52)

52. Thorns and odors are the means of removal. On the removal of spirits by malodorous smoke: H. Freudenthal: Das Feuer und die Menschheit, I, p. 112 f. By the same author: Das Feuer in deutchen /sic/ /correct reading: deutschem / Glauben , cited in G. Megas: [illegible], p. 50, n. 3.

If, despite all this, the Daoutis attacks, it is advisable above all not to speak of it to anyone, so as not to attract him anew. Only some old men "who are experienced with it" are warned. Then the sheepfolds that have been attacked are moved silently during the night and in absolute secrecy. Thus Daoutis, disoriented, is thereafter incapable of finding the animals and attacking them again. But that is not all. The livestock 783 233 789 must be purified of the miasmas or rather of the moral contamination with which the Daoutis has covered it. An underground passage, a kind of tunnel, is hurriedly dug out, at the entrance of which a tortoise shell is hung. [411] The animals pass through it one by one and when the last leaves it a shot is fired with the left hand. (53)

53. G. Megas: Ibid., p. 50, says that the evil spirits are attacked by the shots. In this case the weapons are loaded with the left hand and the shooter takes aim with the left eye.

[171] This practice, which is also followed by other rural groups of northern [372] Greece, combines at one and the same time the curative properties of [823] fire, the regenerative forces of the earth (the passage through the opening

783 /267 cont./
233 imitating the very act of birth) and the transference of the evil into the
789 latter, according to the Sarakatsani explanation. The shot, which removes
(372) the demons, and the tortoise shell, symbol of chthonian forces, complete
(823) the rite whose ultimate goal is to oppose the destructive forces with the forces of life (54).

(191) 54. G. Megas: Ibid., p. 21 f. and p. 33-34, gives detailed descriptions of this practice, followed by the inhabitants of northern Greece.-- See also N. Polaites: Λαογραφικά Σύμμεικτα, Τ. Β', p. 203 et suiv.:

In case of an epidemic, the practice was likewise followed by the men; it constituted a means of purification against the illness.--M. Eliade: Ibid., p. 220.

796 In general, however, the demons also amuse themselves. A young Sarakatsani told us that he with his small playmates had set up a seesaw. The demons often came there during the night and played while uttering cries and laughter.

/268/ The group of kalikantzari, (55)

55. On the kalikantzari there is a large bibliography. We cite among others: J. Guthbert Lawson: Modern Greek Folklore /cited in English/, pp. 120-255, G. Dumezil: Le problème des Centaurs, p. 48. D. Loukatos: Ibid., p. 9 footnote 2, citing K. A. Pomoios: Οἱ Καλλικάντζαροι, says that the kalikantzari symbolize the spirits of the dead. which are also called paghanà, are playful spirits who content themselves with frightening people and urinating on the fire, into cooking pots or even on food. They are led by a "lame one" who is the first to come out of their underground hiding place at Christmas and also the first to go back there , faithfully followed by the others, at the end of their earthly sojourn at Epiphany. Their faces and bodies call to mind the

/268 cont:/

776 descriptions of satyrs. Sharp claws and piercing cries are attributed to them. In order to prevent them from entering the hut, the entrance door
776 789 is covered with wild asparagus (the thorny shrub repulsing the evil),
[824] asphodel bulbs (the flower of the dead according to Hellenic beliefs,
[412] hence indicated for exorcising underground demons), (56). One may also
[372] 56. The bulbs symbolize life. They are dry but sprout once they are planted. Thus any threat against life in the broad sense of the term can be neutralized by them.

instead place there the xethali of the hearth (see above, p. 44, figure 15), that type of poker symbolizes the fire and therefore its purifying force. However, the kalikantzari take advantage of the slightest opportunity to enter the hut. So to protect oneself from their wicked tricks it is necessary to avoid sitting too near the hearth of leaving there an uncovered pot, and to see that all the dishes are put back--precautions which prevent these spirits from soiling men, utensils and food. It is also necessary to drive a fork into raw meat [the prongs of the fork threaten to painfully prick the "kalikantzari"). One must also avoid washing one's
[515] head and combing one's hair during the days when the kalikantzari move about on the earth, in order to give them no opportunity to get into one's hair, "for the acts of men influence the spirits." If the kalikantzari
776 dirty the food it is no longer edible. A Sarakatsani told us that one day
789 during the Christmas festivities, his mother and he had roasted some pieces
267 of meat for their lunch on the embers of the hearth in their hut. This
252 meat seemed tastless to them. They first thought they had not added enough salt. In the evening they prepared some of the same meat in a pot. This time the taste was truly abominable. They then realized that they
[251] had forgotten to stick a fork into the piece of raw meat /269/ hanging in its usual place in a corner of the hut; they concluded that the kalikantzari had urinated on it.

776 789 However, the radical procedure that puts an end to their sojourn among

/270 cont./

000 751 789 [237] burned bit of the father's cloak. The first excrements of the newborn child are kept and transformed into an amulet. An amulet meant always to protect the child is made from the excrements of a dog.

[825] All these measures put the child in contact with the mysterious forces that dwell in the body of the mother and the father and that have given it life, or with the warding-off properties of the dog /271/ (a being capable of forcing back the evil spirits) (61).

[191] 61. The beliefs pertaining to the caul and the dog also existed in the Byzantine epoch. See Ἰω. ΤΖΕΤΖΗ : Σχόλια ... vers 88 et 27. --Moreover, everthing dealing with the woman in childbirth, her excrements, her clothing, transmit vitality. The physician ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ὁ ΤΡΑΛΛΕΙΩΝ I, 437, says that sick people gave their shirts to a parturient to wear; after her confinement they got them back and put them on again in order to be restored to health. On blood, the source of life, see

Ἰωάννου τοῦ Νηστευτοῦ : Ἀναπλάσεις καὶ Τάξις ἐκ τῶν Ἱερῶν. M. P. G. 88.

[372] The regenerative fire represented by the ashes also must not be forgotten though the role of the latter is not limited to this.

844 974 789 [822] In general, visits to the woman in childbirth and to the child are forbidden. Those who enter may bring evil spirits with them. That is why one hangs on the door of the hut a tuft of red wool--this color having warding-off properties; (62)

[302] [191] 62. Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 203. Colors are treated as powers ...Red, for example, is the only color everywhere used to paint the body (Grosse: Die Aufange /sic/ /should read: Anfange/ der Kunst, 58 f.). In popular beliefs red is a color that protects against evils and the evil eye:

Ἰωάννου ἀρχ. Σταυρ. ΚΥΡΙΑΚΙΔΟΥ : Ὁ Ἰωάννης Χρυσόστομος ὡς Λειτουργός, p. 204. — Ν. ΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ : Ibid., p. 200 et suiv. — Ἠ. ΣΑΡΑΝΤΗΣ : Τὸ φυτὸ τῆς Θρύπτης, p. 89-90, etc.

789 /273 cont./
585 influences that ceaselessly threaten the well-being of men and, jealous,
[796] take advantage of moments of happiness to attack them. The smacks transform what seems to be a festival into a brawl. (68)

68. This practice is a result of the anthropomorphic form that the Saraktsani give certain bad spirits.

789 That is why, in the course of the feast that follows the celebration of
784 the wedding, the Sarakatsani put on a dance performed by the men alone.
535 Two young men, suitably disguised, here represent the married couple. At
585 a given moment they withdraw from the dance and, in front of everybody, simulate the sexual act, so that /274/ the evil spirits, deceived, descend on them - with no harmful consequences - and spare the couple.

789 However, curative procedures, as such, are not lacking. It is very
825 advisable, for example, always to have on oneself something derived from
[237] wild animals (skin of the hare, hairs of the wild boar, feathers of the partridge, etc.). These animals that feed on all the plants and shrubs of the field and forest transmit to men their admirable properties (strength, resistance, speed, etc.) as well as the medicinal qualities of their food. (69)

69. Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 66: "The superiority of the animal is quite evident. The animal has a power that is lacking in man: muscular force, sharpness of vision, keenness of smell, a sense of orientation..."

That is why honey is considered the best medicine because the bees gather
342 honey from all the flowering plants. When the building of a new hut is
789 finished, one does not move in before having lighted a fire in the hearth.
392 And if possible a priest is called to celebrate the office of the holy water. These two procedures tend to assure the well-being of the family. (70)

70. In both cases one seeks to keep off evil influences. That fire has warding-off properties against all evils that try to enter a new dwelling before people do is a very

342 /274 cont./
789
372 widespread belief. See: A. Métraux: Contribution au Folklore Andin, p. 87.--P. Deffontaines: Géographie et Religion, p. 30 (Madagascar), etc.

751 The Sarakatsani women put nettle leaves on their clothing in order
824 to protect their skin from irritation caused by clothing and perspiration, especially during the long marches of the seasonal migrations. It is a practice based on the idea that, since the irritation caused by the nettle and the sweat seem the same, the same cause is found in their origin. When one wears the cause on oneself, it will not work against one, for it is as if the cause worked against itself. (71)

71. It is the same idea that justifies the wearing of the weight from the fairies' spindle in order to protect oneself against their evil spells.

752 The Sarakatsani treat chapped hands and lips with the blood of a lamb
825 killed during the festival of Saint George, the protector of the Sarakatsani. The blood of the lamb offered as a sacrifice has curative properties. (72)

72. As we shall see in connection with religion.

755 The technique of the transfer of an evil, which we were able to observe in the protection against Daoutis, is also applied in connection with /275/ throat ailments. While pronouncing "religious words" (according to the common expression), the secret of which is, as usual, jealously guarded, the healer draws a sign of the cross on the throat and makes a gesture of transfering the evil onto the arm of the patient where a sort of vesicular pustule is formed, the treatment of which is very easy and less annoying than that of the throat.

789 The protection of the livestock against evil influences includes many
372 practices. We have spoken of the half-charred log and the head of the
825 viper which are carried into the strougha. In addition to promoting
233 fertility, they are charged with a protective role, the first as representative of the healing fire and the second owing to the inherent qualities of the snake. There are other methods which we must bring to light.

/278 cont./
used in many other magic proceedings.

/279/ Finally, one makes the sign of the cross over the affected individual while one holds some grains of salt. Then one throws the salt in the fire where it explodes. Whereupon one gathers up the fragments and puts them in water. When the salt has dissolved one sprinkles the patient with this liquid. The properties of salt combined with the purification by fire will act therapeutically on him. (81)

81. Several ideas are intertwined in these practices. The influence of certain materials and certain forces combined with the word, the exorcism or incantation, as well as with the evocation of sacred personages are at the center of the action. All this is well known to us, hence it is not necessary to go back to it. Let us point out only that these methods aim at purifying the afflicted subject.

The protection of the livestock against the evil eye presupposes mainly two things: an amulet and silence. The amulet consists of a new ball in which are put salt, incense, some pitch, some dust, etc. (materials which the women take to church on Maundy Thursday to have them blessed), (82) as well as some pieces of paper on which a country priest writes appropriate exorcisms. (83)

82. See the next chapter: the ritual of Maundy Thursday.

83. This is an old custom of pagan origin, related to oracles, etc., which St. Jean Chrysostome has severely criticized: M.P.G. 62, 358, etc. This same author gives us a brief description of these writings: Christian vows, magic phrases, names of rivers, star of David, etc. Since we have not had occasion to see the writings the Sarakatsani use, it is impossible for us to say whether they correspond to those described by Chrysostome. This custom has also been condemned